WORLDS DISPLAYED;

FOR THE

BENEFIT OF YOUNG PEOPLE,

BY A

FAMILIAR HISTORY

OF

SOME OF THEIR INHABITANTS.

I know that it shall be well with them that fear God. . . . . Ecclesiastes viii. 12.

Wo unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him . . . . . .

BOSTON:
Printed and sold by Lincoln & Edmands,
No. 53 Cornhill.

CHILDREN'S BOOK
COLLECTION

LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

UL CHILD.

My Son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother.

Prov. vi 20.

THE ARK.

"And God said unto Noah—Make thee an ark.—And Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his house."

See Hist. Methusa, page 48.

Grant by the British & Foreign Soc.

Worlds Displayed;

FOR THE

BENEFIT OF YOUNG PEOPLE,

BY A

FAMILIAR HISTORY

OF

SOME OF THEIR INHABITANTS.

I know that it shall be well with them that fear God. . . . . *Eccles.* viii. 12.

Wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him. Isa. iii. 11.

BOSTON:

Printed and sold at No. 53, Cornhill,

BY LINCOLN & EDMANDS.

Who publish a great variety of Cheap Religious Tracts. On cash purchases of 5 dols. a discount of 5 per cent. will be made; over 10 dols. 10 per cent. The orders of charitable distributors, resident in any part of the United States, promptly answered.

1811.

Price, 1,20 *cts. a doz.* 9 *dols. a hundred.*

PREFACE.

THE design of this little book is to impress the minds of young people with the importance of time and eternity, and to exhibit the close connexion that there is betwixt them.

Narrative appears a pleasing and engaging way of communicating divine truth to young persons. Some may judge it, when fictitious, to be an improper instrument for cutting down the corruption of men; but as God has so frequently used the same method, his example may be safely followed. The Old Testament contains many parables, and much of our Lord's instruction during his ministry on earth, was communicated in this form. The Pilgrim's Progress, Hervey's Dialogues, and many of the Tracts published for the Cheap Repository, are of a similar kind, are generally and justly approved, and have done much good.

Some of the passages may appear rather too terrific; but as the attack is designed against obdurate and strongly fortified hearts, which is the true and scriptural description of every unrenewed soul, the shot does not appear too sharp, nor the artillery too heavy. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus is perhaps more so than any of the following lives.

The first edition having gone off in less than four months, encourages me to publish a second, and to praise the Lord for making it so acceptable to his people.

I take this method of returning thanks to my friends, and to strangers on both sides of the Tweed, for sending their candid remarks on the first edition; I have in consequence made several alterations on the second.

That the Lord's blessing may accompany this small effort to be useful to my fellow sinners, is my sincere prayer.

JOHN CAMPBELL.

Edinburgh, Feb. 25, 1800.

WORLDS DISPLAYED.

ONE evening in May laſt, Apollos and I took a long walk through the fields. The ſun had nearly finiſhed his courſe; the whole creation around us ſeemed ſilent as death, not a breath of wind was heard; every thing combined ſolemnly to pleaſe the imagination, and to produce thought. We talked awhile upon the wiſdom and power of that God who gave being to all the beauties which ſurrounded us; then upon the ſuperior excellency of that heavenly glory we ſoon hoped to ſee. By this converſation I found my deſire to depart to the happy regions of immortality greatly increaſed.

After our return home, I was not long aſleep, till the ſcene we had talked over came freſh into my mind, and, to my delight and aſtoniſhment, a heavenly meſſenger addreſſed me thus: "I am acquainted

with your desire to visit the mansions of the blessed, and am commissioned to carry you there, to exhibit to you some of the glories of that state, and afterwards to conduct you back to your present condition, till my Lord's time be fully come to fix you forever in his everlasting kingdom. Happy tidings! I exclaimed, being overpowered with transport at the thought of beholding Jesus on his throne, at the head of his redeemed.

We mounted in the air with a quickness I can only compare to lightning. After passing innumerable suns and worlds, I inquired if we were near heaven: The angel replied with a smile, we are only in the frontiers of the Mediator's kingdom. I asked what kind of beings inhabited these vast bodies scattered through the immensity of space. My commission, said he, is to convey and guard you to the metropolis of my Lord's empire, I cannot go beyond it; but, for your comfort, let me tell you, that when you finish your course below, and enter on your glorified life, nothing shall be hid from you; then you shall know even as you are known.

We had scarcely ended this conversation, when I was desired to look directly above my head; I did so, and to my inexpressible surprise I saw a brightness to which the sun

bears no reſemblance. Pointing to it with his finger, the angel said, that is heaven. In a moment I was ſurrounded with hundreds of thoſe whom I had known upon earth, all welcoming me to their bliſsful peaceful realms. Perceiving me aſtoniſhed at the grandeur of their appearance, they deſired me to ſuſpend my wonder, till they brought me into the preſence of Jeſus. Upon this they unanimouſly exclaimed, "To him be all the glory!" We flew paſt millions of ſeraphs, and millions of the ſpirits of juſtified men made perfect, till we came to Jesus the Judge of all, of whom indeed I dare not now ſpeak, for no tongue can utter his praiſe, or declare his glory.

Turning my eyes in every direction, I exclaimed, No wonder that this ſhould be called an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory!

While I ſtood wondering at the Saviour, and extolling his mercy and grace to me, in redeeming me from misery, and promising ſoon to put me in full poſſeſſion of all the glory of his kingdom, I was ſurpriſed with the noiſe of ſhouts of joy from every quarter. I aſked my guide the reaſon of this new appearance. He replied, See a legion of angels advancing to the throne with the ſoul of one of your countrymen! This is he en-

trance to our ſociety. Every accession to our number gives riſe to a new ſong of praiſe to the Lamb of God. I underſtood that the happy perſon who approached amidst the proceſſion of thouſands of the ranſomed and angelic tribes, was a young man called Peter Patience, who had died of a putrid fever a few minutes before. When the charming ſolemnities of his firſt interview with Jeſus were over, I made up to him, and deſired we ſhould have a walk together along the ſtreets of the New Jeruſalem. With all my heart, ſaid he. But for some time I found it impoſſible for us to have any converſation, he was so transported with his new condition. Holding up both his hands, he exclaimed, Am *I* in heaven! once a vile wretch! Is it poſſible that I am eternally ſtationed in this glorious realm! Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul! hoſanna in the higheſt! Turning about to the Lord Jeſus, he caſt his crown of glory at his feet, crying out with a voice like thunder, "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb, to receive honour, thankſgiving, and praiſe, forever and ever!" Upon this we walked a little farther, when he cried out, "O! O! I cannot forget my dear Saviour, I can think of nothing elſe. Were there the ſmalleſt danger of my ever falling from all this felicity, it would mar my joy; but

that is impoſſible. I am now to be forever, yes, forever with the Lord. Bleſs the Lord, O my soul! hoſanna in the higheſt.

As I was uncertain how long my viſit to this happy place was to continue, I was anxious he would proceed to relate the way the Lord had led him through the wilderneſs. I therefore requeſted this favour as ſoon as he found himſelf capable for the taſk. O! ſaid he, I rejoice to give you this information; and when you return to the world, you are welcome to publiſh it from the houſe top, that periſhing men may come to the Saviour, and obtain everlaſting life.

Hiſtory of Peter Patience.

I was born in the weſt of Scotland. My father was a gentleman, of landed property, conſequently I was educated to ſhine in what the world calls *high life*. I do not recollect of getting one good advice during the firſt twelve years of my life, except once that a poor cottager bid me be a good boy, and to ſay my prayers evening and morning. I thought I was a very good boy, and as for prayers, I neither knew whom to pray to, or what I was to pray for; ſo I ſoon forgot the poor man's advice.

Our family used to go pretty often to the parish church; and after I passed my twelfth year, they took me along with them. But as no notice was taken of what the preacher had said, by any of our family, it never struck me that I ought to attend to his discourse. Thus I was no wiser by my attendance upon church; although the minister was a good man as I afterwards knew. My father died when I was about twenty years of age, but left his affairs in great disorder, by having entered into various speculations to increase his fortune. This sunk my spirits, and rendered me very unhappy. Our surgeon being consulted about my health, advised that I should take a trip to the south to recover my health and spirits. This counsel was of God, though I then knew it not.

After residing some months at Bath, I set out for Bristol to visit a relation there, whom I had never seen. On the way I was seized with sickness, and found myself unable to proceed on the journey. The coach stopped at a small inn, upon the road, and there I went to bed immediately. I was hardly in bed, when a 'squire Sympathy, who had observed my distress when alighting from the carriage, sent his respects, and offered to visit me if agreeable. As I had no friend with me, I readily em-

braced his offer; upon which he came up ſtairs, and taking his ſeat at my bedſide, inquired kindly into my diſtreſs. I was greatly surpriſed at his ſympathy and attention. Not a day paſſed but he paid me two or three viſits, and ſometimes brought his lady along with him.

One day, when talking of my diſtreſs, he obſerved, that ſin was the cauſe of all our ſufferings here; that theſe ſufferings were only the beginning of ſorrows to the wicked; that an eternity of wo awaited the unrighteous. All this was as new to me as to the infant of a day old. Sir, ſaid I, pray how do you come to know theſe things? From the ſcriptures, was his anſwer. Finding that I was completely ignorant of all divine truth, he gave me a very full account of the fall of man; of the miſery into which he is brought by it; and then preached Jeſus Chriſt to me as a periſhing ſinner. Like Felix, I trembled as he talked. I confeſſed that I had lived without God, and without hope in the world, and that these were ſtrange things to me. I begged he would pray to God for pardon and grace to my poor ſoul. He did ſo, kneeling down by my bed ſide. When done I embraced him in the moſt affectionate manner. I told him I conſidered him a friend indeed, and that I hoped my ſickneſs was the hap-

pieſt event of my life; that he was a meſſenger of God to my ſoul; that now I ſaw, and believed there was a reality in religion; that I needed a Saviour; that Jeſus was juſt ſuch an one as I ſtood in need of. Upon hearing me talk in this manner, he praiſed Jeſus with the moſt ſincere devotion, and invited me to remove to his houſe, which was hard by, as ſoon as I ſhould find myſelf able to endure the fatigue. In three or four days after, I got ſtrength to comply with his invitation. I found it as the houſe of God, and the gate of heaven. Their whole converſation was about Jeſus, his glory, grace, croſs, kingdom, &c.

So ſoon as I was able, I wrote a long letter to my mother, informing her of the wonderful knowledge that had been communicated to me about our ſtate as periſhing ſinners, and the amazing love of God in ſending his Son to deliver us from this miſery; beſeeching her to read the ſcriptures, to pray to God for mercy, and not to loſe the crown of glory. I told her that our whole family had been living as beaſts, minding only earthly things; that none of us ever thought upon God, heaven, hell, our ſouls, or in ſhort any thing important; that mere trifles had engroſſed our whole attention, ſuch as eating, drinking, diverſions, &c. that though theſe in modera-

tion were neceſſary, none of them were the ends of our creation. I wrote to her pointedly of the glory and of the happineſs of chriſtians. I alſo informed her that I had not obſerved ſo much real, exalted, and manly happineſs, during my whole life in my father's houſe, as I had witneſſed during the eight days I had aſſociated with the family under whoſe roof I then was.

Inſtead of answering this letter, and congratulating me upon my recovery, my mother wrote to our friend at Briſtol, requeſting him inſtantly to viſit her ſon Peter, and to have him put into a place of safety, as from his letter he had all the appearance of being deranged.

Upon receiving her letter, Mr. B. of B. came to the houſe where I reſided, and I cannot expreſs how ſurpriſed he was, to find me ſitting cheerfully converſing with my friend Sympathy, for he expected to ſee me in a ſtraight jacket. After a little general converſation, I took him to my room. He told me my mother had written under very ſtrong apprehenſions as to the wretchedness of my condition, in conſequence of a letter ſhe had received from me, and had deſired him to viſit me, and inquire into my circumſtances. I told him his story ſurpriſed me, for I never had discerned *truth* till now; and it was only about our ever-

lasting salvation that I had written my dear mother. I did it freely because I loved her, and wished her to know Jesus, and obtain heaven as well as myself. Upon this Mr. B. shrugged up his shoulders, and expressed his regret to find a gentleman imbibing notions calculated only to amuse the rabble. Where will you find men of genius and learning, added he, attending to such matters? If you persist in these opinions, you will be banished from polite society, and be forced to associate only with the low and the vulgar. Here I stopped him, and taking up the Bible, which lay upon the table, said, "Mr. B. this book is the word of God; it contains a revelation from God to man. If so, is it not the duty of every man to read it with attention, to believe its doctrines, and obey its precepts? If this conduct deprive me of the character of a gentleman, I shall not regret the loss. Because a man possesses a few hundred pounds in the year, is he therefore to be deaf to the calls and invitations, and commandments of his God? Is he therefore to disregard the salvation of his soul? Believe me, Mr. B. it deeply concerns you as well as me, to hear what God testifies in his word; time is short, eternity is at hand, and then we must give an account to God how we have lived. Pray, Mr. B. did you ever

read the Bible?" Not I, said he, since I was a boy! "I beg then, Sir, you would read it now. Should it have such an effect upon you, as it has had upon me, you will confess you never knew happiness till you read that blessed book." My friend made no reply, but looked quite pensive and pale. We then went and joined Mr. Sympathy; conversed about the gospel; had prayers and supper, after which we separated.

Next morning Mr. B. came to me very early; his first salutation was highly gratifying. Certainly, said he, there is a reality in religion, to which I am an entire stranger. I hope I shall never again talk reproachfully of pious people. He and I set off in the forenoon for Bristol, where I remained a fortnight; during which period the most of our discourse turned upon religious topics. Before I left the house he established the worship of God, evening and morning, with his family. I expect to see him in heaven very soon.

In his letter to my mother he exhorted her to hail her son with all joy, that formerly he was lost, but now is found; that God had visited and redeemed his soul; that she would find a more obedient, loving son, than ever before, &c. This letter stunned my mother; while reading it, she frequent-

ly exclaimed, I wonder what this will turn to.

Being now restored to health, I set off on my return home. Upon reaching my mother's house, our whole family came running out to see what kind of a mortal I had become. When they observed my cheerfulness and affection to them, they began to form a favourable opinion of me.

After a week or two had passed very agreeably, I considered what means I should use for instructing my brothers and sisters in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. I took them separately into my room, and addressed them upon the concerns of their souls. Some of them were greatly affected, and a visible alteration soon took place upon their conduct; but my poor mother, and two of her sisters who staid with us, vehemently opposed every thing like religion. They prohibited the youngest from ever being in my company, except at meals, and ordered every pious book to be put out of the house, except my library, which I kept locked in a closet. Many a tear I shed, and many a prayer I put up to God for them.

During all this commotion excited by the gospel, I was seized with a fever. I had just time and strength, before I became insensible, to set death and life in a scriptu-

ral point of view before my mother, my brothers and ſiſters; inſiſted on the neceſſity of being born again before we could enter the kingdom of God; declared to them the happineſs I had experienced during the ſhort time I had walked in the path of life; confeſſed my faith in the Son of God, and my hope in ſeeing his glory, and being forever with him in his kingdom. I ſaw they were all drowned in tears; but I fell aſleep, and recollect nothing more that happened till I was brought into this paradiſe of God.

I thanked Mr. Patience for the hiſtory of himſelf which he had related, and away we walked along the ſtreets of the heavenly city, admiring the ſplendours of that place, aſtoniſhed at the glory of its inhabitants, and extolling its eternal Prince. At this time a venerable ſaint came up to us, and told me his name was Bede. He ſaid, when I was in the world, I wrote concerning one of my brethren that he was a good man; but I added, a poor man! he does not keep Eſther in our way. This was bigotry, and I beg you to publiſh my recantation of that ſentiment.

In a little Mr. Patience pointed to two glorious ſaints, walking arm in arm; now, ſaid he, when these two were preachers of Chriſt in your world, the one wrote a

warning against the other, but you see how well they agree now; there is no division here, we are all one in Christ Jesus.

WALKING along the streets of the New Jerusalem, a spacious mansion on the south side of the city particularly attracted my attention. For whom, said I, to my conductor, is this noble edifice eternally prepared? It is the everlasting habitation of a young lady, who is soon to leave your world. She has endured much persecution for the sake of Jesus; and many, by seeing her good works, have glorified her heavenly father, by submitting to his righteousness, and walking in all his commandments blameless.

When returning from our excursion, we stepped into the young lady's mansion, and found every hall resounding with angelic mirth on the safe arrival of her for whom the house was prepared. On the lintel of the door the following inscription was elegantly engraven in Hebrew characters; *This is she, who came out of great tribulation, having washed her robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* A little above, these words were indented in letters of gold; HALLELUJAH! HALLELUJAH! THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH.

In a little we were introduced to the newly glorified inhabitant, whose countenance bespoke perfection of happiness. She was fired with love to her blessed Redeemer; from her lips flowed praises to his glorious name.

After some conversation about what we saw and heard, I begged her to give me an account of her life while in the world, and how she escaped the pollutions thereof, remarking that I was soon to revisit the world she had left; and, to promote the glory of sovereign grace, I intended to publish the Biography of the heavenly saints which I should collect during my stay among them.

With great frankness she proceeded to detail her history.

History of Fanny Faithful.

I was born in the city of Amsterdam, in Holland. My father was a rich burgomaster, in that city. He was a good man, and a member of the Reformed Church. In early life, I was instructed in the doctrines and duties of the scriptures. Every day my father spent an hour or more in hearing me read the Bible, and endeavouring to make me understand it. I liked this task very well for some time, but after my curiosity was satisfied my heart began to

rebel against the truths he taught me. I tried every method to escape the hour appropriated for reading. Sometimes I pretended to be sick, sometimes I complained that my eyes were weak, at other times I remained at play out of his sight till the time was gone. Thus did I endeavour to accomplish the ruin of my own soul, by refusing to be acquainted with God. In a short time my father discovered my antipathy against his counsel, and obliged me to meet him regularly every day for reading and considering the scripture. Often, with tears in his eyes, did he beseech me to believe in Jesus, and obey his will. He used frequently to retire with me to his closet, and earnestly pray to Jesus to save my poor soul. I often wept when he would say, "O Jesus! make my dear child Fanny a member of thy happy family. I love her dearly, but I cannot change her heart. Do thou, O God, in mercy to her and to me, give her a new heart, that she may believe in thy Son, and do thy will."

God tried the faith and patience of my affectionate father; for I was turned twenty before I began to think seriously about my soul's salvation.

One evening I ate something for supper which kept me awake during the night. The history of my whole life came under

my review. The continued concern of my father for my eternal happineſs filled me with amazement; the grief I had given him by my ſtubborn hardneſs, pierced me to the heart. I called myſelf an ungrateful wretch. I reſolved to read every book he directed me to, and to embrace every opportunity of converſing with him upon divine things. About ſeven in the morning, I heard my father come out of his room. I called for him to come to me, and told him what had paſſed in my mind during the night. I aſked his forgiveneſs for my paſt conduct towards him, and begged him to continue his kind endeavours to inſtruct me. I noticed tears of affectionate concern trickling down his cheeks. He expatiated on the danger of neglecting ſalvation, and pointed out the reaſon I had to praiſe God that he had not cut me off in the days of my wilful ignorance and impenitence. He told me what an evil and bitter thing ſin was; what a precious Saviour God had provided for us. He commended the amazing love and grace of the Saviour, and exhorted me to believe God's teſtimony concerning him, to pray to him, &c.

On this my father retired, and, no doubt, entered into his cloſet to pray to his God, that my preſent impreſſions might have a happy iſſue.

I now became very thoughtful; the consequences of death occupied my whole attention. What shall I do to be saved? was the genuine language of my soul. When I saw some of my companions hurrying to plays, balls, &c. it cut me to the heart. I lamented their ignorance, folly, and danger. This night, said I, it is possible their souls may be required of them. Poor things: they have no father so kind and faithful to them, as to tell them of wrath to come, and the way to escape it

I had often heard the Bible called the best book in the world. I never *knew* it to be so till now. I found it exactly the book my situation required. I ran to read it as a hungry man to his meal. It now became the food of my soul. I was filled with rapturous pleasure when I read the love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I was convinced by the word of God, that I could perform no works to entitle me to heaven. Indeed, I discovered such wickedness in my heart, that my very best works were defective and defiled. This led me to see the necessity of the sufferings for sin endured by Jesus Christ. I was convinced he had made an atonement for sin; and that this was my conviction or belief. I was conscious, and hence depended on the perfect obedience unto death of Jesus Christ, as

the alone foundation of my hope before God.

I now began to assist my father in instructing my brothers and sisters. I accompanied him when he visited the sick and the poor: when he went to the house of God; when he called upon pious friends, &c.

One day I called upon three young ladies, who had been my companions in the days of my folly. I found them sitting in a room by themselves. They had just been conversing about the change which had taken place upon me, and regretting that my days of pleasure were gone. One of them was so honest as to tell me this; they advised me to give up religion, because it would make me melancholy and sad, and cause all the gay people to shun me.

I inquired what they judged religion to be? They paused for some time, looked at each other, gave a smile, and replied, they did not know. Then said I, I'll tell you: It is to love and serve our God and Creator. Is there any thing in that to make people melancholy? Be so good as to answer my question. Is loving and serving God calculated to make a person melancholy? They answered, No. Well, religion also consists in believing that God forgiveth all our sins for the sake of his Son Jesus. Is that likely to make us melancholy? No,

we don't think it is. Is the hope that God is our friend, and that we are his, calculated to make us unhappy? No, ſurely not. You know that it is very natural to be afraid of death; it is a part of religion to be delivered from that fear. Is that likely to make us gloomy? No, it is not. God promiſes to his friends, that he will be with them in affliction, and in troublous times, to ſupport and comfort them, and to make their trials do them good; it is a part of real religion to believe theſe promiſes. Is this likely to make people melancholy? Now they all gazed at each other. One, more talkative than the reſt, ſaid, ſiſters, did you ever think before what religion was? I am certain I never did. I do not imagine that theſe principles can make people unhappy. I wonder what our friends and acquaintance mean by always ſaying ſuch terrible things againſt religion. If what Fanny ſays be true, I think nobody can be happy till they are religious; what think you? Indeed, ſaid one, I am of the ſame opinion. And ſo am I, ſaid the other. After this candid declaration, I ſeized the opportunity to warn them againſt taking up falſe reports againſt any ſet of people, without previouſly examining into their truth: and earneſtly entreated them to attend to the momentous concerns of their ſouls, and to

consider the awful danger of living in the world without seeking and serving God. I protested before them, that I never had a happy day till I knew Jesus Christ, and that I never was contented till then. I praised God for his wondrous love in sending such a Saviour as Jesus; in bringing me to read of him, think of him, and believe in him. Though the last trumpet should at this moment sound, (said I) I would not tremble! Though the angel should swear by him that liveth and abideth forever, that time with men upon earth should not be a minute longer, yet would I rejoice in the Lord, I would be glad in thee! in thee, the God of my salvation. They wept bitterly at these solemn words, and went out of the room, seriously thinking on what had passed. One of them afterwards turned out a pious girl, and is just now very near the throne of the Lamb. See! yonder she is, casting her glittering crown at his blessed feet. Bless the Lord, O my soul! hosanna in the highest!

To return to my own history. I became a lover of retirement. Formerly, when left at home, I was perfectly miserable; I looked out at every window to catch some giddy acquaintance, to call them in to tattle about nonsense. But now I blessed God for every quiet hour. O how many

pleasant ones I spent in perusing the history of the precious Lamb of God, who came to take away the sins of the world! When I read of his last sufferings, I was astonished; I wept with love; and affectionately thanked him for his marvellous grace and goodness. O how delightfully I fed on the fourteenth, and following chapters of John! These appeared to me as opening the window of heaven, and exposing to public view, the mysteries of God.

Though my father was truly pious, yet most of our relations were worldly people. These often sneered at my religion, and upbraided me as precise and peevish; and I know not what all. I must not omit telling you that one of my keenest persecutors, being afterwards converted by the amazing grace of Jesus, declared to me, that at the very time she was speaking all manner of evil falsely against me, she secretly wished she was like me: that her persecution did not arise from a persuasion I was wrong, but from a hatred to any thing like holiness, and because she felt herself reproved by my conduct. And let me tell you a secret I have learned since I came to heaven, that the most of the persecutors of God's people upon earth, either fear the saints are in the right, or absolutely believe it. There are also many people who run to plays, balls,

company, &c. merely to kill reflection, to ward off the thought of a judgment to come. A guilty conſcience is the diſeaſe of thouſands; and inſtead of running to the Saviour for relief from it, they ruſh into the follies of life. There are alſo many people whoſe cuſtom it is, when preſſed with the cares of a family, or their buſineſs, to have recourſe to intoxication, in order to drown care. Poor creatures! they know not what a ſovereign remedy Jeſus is, againſt all theſe things

The Lord enabled me with calmness and patience to endure the perſecutions which I met with, and in proceſs of time, my relations gave up the conteſt; indeed they would have been quite ſurpriſed if I had deviated from my cuſtomary life, and would have chid me as ſeverely for it, as for the contrary conduct before. The world are quick ſighted; they ſoon notice when a child of God acts out of character, and then they have neither mercy nor charity for him. One would be apt to imagine that theſe people do not think that they are under any law to God, that the law is only made for chriſtians. They make flaming apologies for the immoralities of bad men, but none of the ſmalleſt blemiſhes of good men. This conduct proves what maſter they ſerve, to what claſs they belong.

But not to detain you longer with my history, I came through many trials, and experienced many pleasant hours of communion with my God and Saviour, whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and who makes the paths which lead to his kingdom peace to those who walk in them. My Lord at last sent his messenger to remove me from your wilderness world. My sickness was not severe, neither was it of long continuance. So gentle was the last stroke, that I scarcely knew I was dying. My mind was fixed upon our Saviour's words, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." In a moment I heard the hosannas of heaven, and saw the tribes of God going thither in throngs from our earth. I came with exceeding joy in myself to this wondrous world, and with mirth on every side. O what fools are those who lose all this glory for the sake of enjoying the toys of time for a few hours! When you return to the residence of unglorified men and women, beseech them on the knees of importunity to consider their ways, and turn to the Lord, that they may here live forever. Tell the disputers of your world, that there is a God, a just God, and a Saviour; that this God is love; that his dominions extendeth over all. Tell christians who are wrangling about

forms, who are trembling for their own arks, and talking to the prejudice of each other; tell those who are teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men, or pushing after the advancement of their own characters to obtain praise of men; I say, tell such to consider the glory, and grace, and knowledge of Jesus with deeper attention, and then their souls will be chiefly vexed for the abominations of wicked men, and disposed to rejoice at the sight of real religion wherever it appears. Tell the ungodly that the kingdom of Jesus is fast filling up; that shortly he will present it to his Father a perfect kingdom; then the door of mercy will be forever shut, and the opposers of the King plunged into the abyss of wo. Tell all men to repent; that *now* is the accepted time, that *now* is the day of salvation.

On this she flew to the feet of Jesus, ascribing all her salvation from first to last, to his dear love and grace. She triumphed that she had now an eternal opportunity to praise him. She declared she would not be a day out of his presence for ten thousand thousand worlds! She appeared almost at a loss how to express her extatic triumph.

As for me, I was mightily affected with this glorious scene. I saw nothing to hurt, or disturb, or destroy, or interrupt peace, in

all this holy mountain. I saw no suffering, no sorrow, no sighing! All was perfect love, peace, joy, and praise.

Reader, do you desire to go there when you die? Yes, I am sure you do. Balaam did so, but he loved the mammon of this world. He wished to gratify his lust here, and to live happy hereafter, which is quite incompatible with the government of God. Holiness is the only way to happiness; without it none shall see the Lord in heaven.

While I stood silently admiring the harmony, love, happiness, and perfect peace which universally pervaded the heavenly country, I was struck with shouts of triumph which commenced in the vicinity of our Lord's presence, and which spread like lightning over his immense empire. Inquiring into the cause, I was informed that ten careless sinners in Bohemia had been a few minutes before converted to the faith of Christ. Are you surprised at their rejoicing so heartily at this? said the angel. Do not you read in the scriptures, that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth? We are deeply interested in the displays of divine mercy to men upon earth; we rejoice in the glory that redounds to our dear

Lord; and in the boundless, endless felicity to which the poor sinner is thereby exalted, the prodigious misery he has thereby escaped, and a thousand other things combined with that event. Truly you, terrestrial saints, see these things but darkly as through a glass, or you would feel more deeply interested in the salvation of poor, perishing mortals.

While the angel thus addressed me, he stopped, and pointed out to me one who was walking past. That happy man, said he, was many years in prison for his stedfast adherence to the doctrine of Christ. Many a time, when his faith in God was nigh failing, was I sent to support him in his doleful dungeon. He continued to witness a good confession, till a commission was given by the Lord to release him from the dominions of mortality. Remember that our Lord afflicts none of his family without a good reason for it. The patience which that man was enabled to exhibit, so struck several of his persecutors, that they set a searching into the source of his principles, viz. the scriptures of truth, and were so convinced by their divine evidence, that they believed in Jesus with all their hearts. To accomplish this glorious end was our Lord's reason for allowing him to suffer such affliction. Upon this I justified God,

and ſaid, "All is well!" The angel proceeded: If you knew why God allows diſtreſs of mind, want of health, worldly loſſes, croſſes, &c. to come upon his people on earth, you would pronounce a ſimilar verdict on every part of the conduct of Providence

After this, I ſtepped a little aſide to converſe with a perſon who was loudly praiſing him that ſat upon the throne. I begged him to inform me of his hiſtory; upon which he gave the following account of himſelf.

Hiſtory of a Jewiſh Convert.

I was born in Judea, a few furlongs from Jeruſalem, about a year before our Lord's appearance upon earth. I was brought up by my parents a phariſee. The wickedneſs of my heart prompted me greatly to prefer, and to be much more zealous in defending the traditions, or rather the inventions of the elders, than the revelation of God in Moſes and the prophets. I found theſe were more conſonant to my corruption than the holy and righteous laws of the Lord.

Being once prevailed upon to hear a ſermon by John the Baptiſt, I was a little affected with what he advanced, but quite offended with the coarſeneſs of his attire, and the ſtrictneſs of his tenets. I had no

idea that he was ſent of God, or that he was the harbinger of the Meſſiah.

Some time after this, I heard much about the preaching and miracles of our Saviour; but all that we phariſees did, was to diſpute about them, and generally to ſlight them. The reſurrection of Lazarus cauſed a great outcry againſt Chriſt, inſtigated by the members of the Sanhedrim; and though I joined in the general outcry, I had my fears leſt this ſhould be ſome great prophet whoſe character we were traducing. Though Jeſus paſſed our houſe when on his laſt journey to Jeruſalem, I did not ſo much as go to the door to ſee him.

We were greatly alarmed on the day Jeſus was crucified, by the uncommon darkneſs which happened, and more ſo by a perſon calling at our house and declaring that he ſaw ſeveral rocks of Mount Zion rent in a moſt aſtoniſhing manner; alſo that the vail of the temple, which ſeparated between the holy place and the moſt holy, was torn from top to bottom without human hands. Three days after, we were told that Jeſus, in ſpite of every precaution taken by the chief prieſts, had burſt the tomb, and got out of their hands; likewiſe that ſome who had lain long in the grave, had come forth, and called upon ſeveral citizens of Jeruſalem. All theſe things ſtruck me exceeding-

ly. The claims of Chrift to the character of the Jewifh Meffiah appeared a matter of immenfe magnitude, and deferving the moft attentive confideration. But the prejudice and enmity at that time prevalent againft Jefus, prevented me from mentioning my inward reafonings to my deareft and neareft relations. However, I learned that fome of the followers of the Meffiah were preaching on Pentecoft day. I inftantly ran to the place where they were addressing an immenfe concourfe. Peter was fpeaking with a fervour which demonftrated his own conviction of the truth of what he faid.

I trembled when he boldly afferted the divinity of his Mafter, and when he charged our nation with murdering the Prince of life. I cried out with thoufands more, Men and brethren, what fhall we do to be faved? But O how we rejoiced, when he commanded us to believe in the Lord Jefus Chrift, affuring us, if we did fo, that all our fins fhould be forgiven; that God would even accept us, murderers of his dear Son, as righteous in his fight; that, by the death of Chrift, he opened a way whereby he would eternally appear juft, even when he juftified the ungodly. I believed that Jefus was the Son of God, that his death was the appointed atonement for fin, and that the Old Teftament facrifices all prefigured his one offering.

I ran home to my relations, and preached unto them the glory of Jesus. I besought them to compare the character of Jesus with Old Testament predictions, and they would look no longer for their expected deliverer, that Jesus was the very person, that we had most shamefully joined in the hue and cry that was raised against him, which hindered us from maturely examining the matter.

Our whole family, with many of our neighbours, sat up till midnight, talking about these strange things which had happened, and I assure you they made a solemn impression upon all our minds. Some regretted that they had ever uttered a word against the Messiah, others that they had basely neglected to hear him. In short, all who were present were under deep impressions of the magnitude of these matters. We wrought none, and scarce ate any next day. Some were alarmed lest God should inflict some dreadful judgment upon Jerusalem for the atrocious crime of crucifying the Lord of glory. I told them that by believing in Jesus they became the friends of God, and when inflicting his judgments, he knew well how to distinguish between friends and foes. They believed in Christ, and had peace with God. We all committed ourselves to the care, guidance and protection of God, and then sung the 18th verse of Psalm lxviii.—

Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord might dwell among men.

Believing in Jesus, we rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. We now ate our meals with a merry heart. One day after dinner my father cried out, Hail! O happy redeemed sinners! sing with triumph the twenty third psalm. Jesus will take care of us all our days upon earth, and at the best time he will take us to his eternal embraces. With astonishing animation we sung the psalm, and then wept with joy on each other's necks. We extolled the Saviour wherever we went. We slept rather because it was a duty, for the refreshment of the body, than from any inclination to go to bed. In a word, we experienced a heaven upon earth.

The apostles continued to work miracles almost every day, to confirm the truth of our Lord's resurrection; to these they referred as divine attestations to the truth of their sermons. They publicly declared, that the miracles they wrought were not performed by any power which *they* exerted, but by the power of Jesus whom they preached; that Jesus being God was (although invisible) as really present upon earth as ever. Some of their hearers told

them to ascend to heaven and bring him down again, and then they would believe. Peter said, did you ever see the wind? No, said they, but we daily see its effects, by its shaking the trees, corn, &c. Well, said Peter, though the person of Christ be invisible to you, (for the heavens must retain his human nature till the time of the restitution of all things) yet his presence and power are seen by the miracles he works. Pointing to the converts, These, said he, are witnesses to the presence and power of Christ; once they were his obdurate enemies, now they are his dear friends! By what means was this effected? Come, said he, brethren, tell who converted you? They replied, It is by the grace of Jesus we are what we are! Christ alone made us christians. Not unto us, not unto man, but unto the blessed Jesus, be all the glory!

The priests were soon alarmed by the vast accession of converts to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. They expected to meet with no more trouble from that quarter, after they had accomplished the murder of the Messiah, and were the more irritated against the apostles on this account. They therefore got them apprehended, and cast into prison. This made us cry mightily to God for their release. God heard our prayers, and sent an angel, who liberated them be-

fore the morning. The great men were now completely nonplussed, seeing no prison could securely keep the servants of Jesus. To put the best face upon it they could, they politely sent for the apostles, and commanded them to speak no more of Jesus Christ, but go home and attend to their secular employments. However, they told the priests that God had commanded them to act otherwise; and whether it was duty to obey the Creator or the creature, they left them to judge.

One Stephen, a deacon of the church at Jerusalem, becoming a bold preacher of Jesus, was therefore marked out for persecution. Accordingly he was apprehended and brought before the Jewish inquisition. He made a long speech, and for a while they listened to him with great attention and apparent moderation; but the moment he charged them with that sin which seemed to be teasing their consciences, *viz.* the death of his Lord and master, it occasioned an amazing uproar, for they could not endure to hear of that subject. Their fury was such against this holy man of God, that they gnashed their very teeth at him, and even threatened to devour him. I happened to be present at Stephen's trial, and I shall never forget his behaviour on that occasion, while in the midst of men who

were thirſting for his blood. With a luſtre on his countenance, he calmly looked up towards heaven, and declared that he ſaw Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God, which ſhewed how highly God approved of his life and death for ſin. On this, almoſt the whole aſſembly ran upon him, and dragged him, ſome by the hair, others by the heels, out of the city, and there they ſtoned him. But ſuch was his meekneſs, that, like his great Maſter, he died praying for his murderers. His prayer was heard for one of them. This was a young lad of the name of Saul, who was ſo keenly ſet upon the murder of Stephen, that he watched the clothes of thoſe who were ſtoning him. He afterwards, as is well known upon earth, became a moſt indefatigable preacher of that goſpel which he at this time laboured to deſtroy. Grace has long and ſtrong arms! I ſhall never forget what happineſs I felt on hearing of the converſion of this Saul, the perſecutor. A clerk belonging to the high prieſt, who was a moderate minded young man, called on me one morning, inquiring if I had any friends at Damaſcus, who were chriſtians. I heſitated to tell him, leſt he would inform againſt them. If you have, ſaid he, warn them to take care of Saul, for he has got a commiſſion to impriſon and kill all he can lay

hands on of that description. He set off about a couple of hours ago, direct for Damascus. I instantly wrote to my cousin, who resided there, to give the above information to all that feared the Lord around him. In a few days I received an answer, informing me that the Saviour had appeared to Saul upon the road, and, after reproving him for his sin, had graciously opened his understanding, and revealed his glory unto him. So sudden and powerful was the effect of this visit from our Lord, that, immediately on his arrival at Damascus, this wolf lay down at the feet of our Lord's lamb,* Ananias, and patiently heard him preach Christ.

I ran and read this to several of the apostles, but they suspected it was a forgery designed to entrap them. They were so convinced of this, that they trembled three years after this, when they heard that Saul had arrived at Jerusalem. However, Barnabas, who was bolder at that time, took Saul, and introduced him as a brother to the apostles. Saul had been such a chief promoter of the late persecutions, that immediately after his conversion, the churches had rest throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria.

As I have spoken of Saul, who was afterwards called Paul, allow me to give you

* Isaiah lxv. 25.

the remaining hiſtory of this extraordinary man.

Paul's Hiſtory after his Converſion.

PAUL and Barnabas, who were much alike in temper, zeal, views, &c. contracted a peculiar affection for each other; for Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Ghoſt and of ſaith, who, after labouring for ſome time at Antioch, went to Tarſus in queſt of Paul. When he found him, he repreſented to him the ſtate of Antioch, the capital of Syria; how much his labours were needed in that city; that if an awakening took place there, by the power of God attending their preaching, it was likely to ſpread over all Syria. Paul, full of zeal, needed few arguments. He conſented, left his native city, and they arrived in ſafety at Antioch, where they laboured comfortably and ſucceſsfully for upwards of a year. He inſiſted ſo much upon Chriſt crucified in his ſermons, that his hearers were the firſt believers in the world who were called chriſtians; and a glorious name it is, though much abuſed. What would Paul have ſaid, had he heard a man call himſelf a chriſtian, who did not bow a knee to God twice in a year, or another, who ſwore, or profaned the Lord's day, or merely because he was

born in a certain country ? He ſurely would have been greatly ſhocked.

During the miniſtry of Paul and Barnabas at Antioch, a deputation came from the church of Jeruſalem to the church at Antioch, upon which they were ſpeedily aſſembled. Agabus, the chief ſpeaker, roſe up, and told the deſign of their journey in the following manner :

Holy brethren in Chriſt, partakers of the heavenly calling, God has made known to the ſaints at Jeruſalem that there is to be an uncommon ſcarcity of proviſions over the whole Roman empire. His reaſon for giving us early intimation of this, is not to torment us before the time, but that, like Joſeph of old, we may provide againſt it. The members of the church at Jeruſalem are in poor circumſtances, ariſing from the many perſecutions which have been raiſed againſt them. Many of them have had their goods confiſcated, others their furniture burned at their doors by a malevolent mob. Many of them are ſo hated for their profeſſion of chriſtianity, that no manufacturer will give them a week's work. Others, who are ſhopkeepers, cannot ſell one article, except to their own brethren ; and ſeveral young people have been baniſhed from their father's houſes, for confeſſing that Jeſus was the Chriſt. Theſe combined

afflictions have reduced them to great ſtraits; nevertheleſs, they rejoice in them, and endure as ſeeing him who is inviſible. Here I muſt ſtop and tell you an intereſting ſtory.

One day a mob came to burn the houſe of my brother-in-law for being reported a chriſtian. When ſome were dragging out the beds, chairs, &c. to the door, and others ſetting fire to them, his wife was ſo filled with joy, that Jeſus ſhould count her and her family worthy to ſuffer for his name's ſake, that ſhe broke out in ſongs of praiſe in the very middle of the mob, and thanked the Lord that ſhe had a better and a more enduring portion than thoſe things which the men were deſtroying; that her inheritance on which ſhe chiefly ſet her heart was in heaven, where neither moth nor ruſt could corrupt, nor thieves break through and ſteal. This conduct ſo ſtruck her perſecutors, that they sneaked away, one by one, till the whole went off. A few days afterwards, five of the mob came to the church, confeſſed their ſins, and profeſſed their faith in Jeſus Chriſt, declaring that the exemplary conduct of this chriſtian woman was the occaſion of their converſion. Praiſe the Lord, O our ſouls! Hoſanna in the higheſt.

To proceed to our commiſſion. We are come to ſolicit your pecuniary aid, ſo far

as God has prospered you in your worldly matters, and given you peace to enjoy and keep it. We need use no arguments to incite you to perform this christian duty: you love Christ, and will keep his commandments. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall not only receive sympathy and mercy from man when they need it, but God shall follow them with his loving kindness and tender mercy.

A handsome sum was immediately collected by the church at Antioch, and sent to Jerusalem by Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas, having delivered the charity to the church at Jerusalem, returned to their charge at Antioch; but they were not long there, till the Holy Ghost desired the other teachers of the church to set these two apart for more general labours, to preach Jesus in distant countries. None opposed the will of God, but instantly and unanimously set them apart to this work by fasting, prayer, and laying on of hands.

After preaching in several countries and islands, they came to another Antioch, the chief city of Pisidia, where they faithfully preached Jesus to their Jewish brethren in the synagogue. After quietly hearing their testimony, the Jews withdrew from the synagogue; but some Gentiles, who happened to be present, requested Paul to re-

peat the ſame truths to them the next Sabbath. During the week every body talked of what had paſſed upon Sabbath, and ſo much was the curioſity of the citizens excited, that almoſt the whole inhabitants of Antioch turned out next Sabbath to hear the apoſtle preach. When he ſaw ſuch an immenſe multitude, his holy ſoul was fired with zeal for their eternal ſalvation; the doctrines of the Saviour poured from his lips till his ſtrength was almoſt exhauſted, and great ſucceſs ſeemed to attend this, and ſome other ſermons which he preached. But the enmity of the Jews was thereby excited; accordingly they laid plans to blacken the character of the apoſtles and to hold them up as the ſcum of the earth. They firſt went ſlyly to ſome old ladies, who were generally allowed to be very religious; to theſe they related a number of odd ſtories againſt Paul and Barnabas; the ladies believed them all. They ran through the city and raiſed an aſtoniſhing hue and cry againſt the ſervants of God. A mob was thereby collected, who, with ſtones and bludgeons, drove them not only from the city, but from all that country. The ſervants of God expreſſed their diſapprobation of their conduct, by ſhaking the duſt from their feet againſt them. Even this ſimple act might have its effect upon the minds of ſome who ſaw it done.

When this generation appeared before the judgment of Jesus, would they approve of their own conduct upon this occasion? I believe not. It was the day of their merciful visitation; but they despised and rejected the counsel of God against themselves.

I shall relate no more of Paul's history at present. Adieu, for the Master calleth me.

My conductor did not interrupt our conversation, but the instant it was ended he observed that the period allotted for my visit to the heavenly state was now expired, and he had orders to carry me to the eternal prison of the wicked, that I might be better able to form an estimate of heavenly bliss, and to warn sinners in the lower world to escape from the wrath to come. We now left the holy city amidst the hosannas of millions. Heaven was engraven on my mind, its glory was present to my view. Said I, to my conductor, I see death to me will be unspeakable gain. Truly it will be better than life. I long to depart and be with Christ. I can never now set my heart upon long life, or riches, or honour in the world. All is eclipsed by the glory of Christ. While I was thus speaking, we entered the gloomy gate which led to the

mansions of the miserable. We took a general view of this extensive empire, and noticed misery in all its degrees proportioned by infinite wisdom and power to the guilt contracted in the world. Those who had few opportunities of obtaining the knowledge of God and his Son Jesus Christ, were beaten comparatively with few stripes; but those who had lived in countries blessed with the scriptures of truth, were beaten with many. The vials of the unmixed wrath of God were perpetually pouring out upon them. Many were constantly exclaiming, O that I had never seen the word of God! O that I had never heard of Jesus Christ! O that I had never been advised and entreated to believe in him! O that I had never been born! O that I had died that day! Tell my brethren who are still alive, not to come into this place of torment, for they will add to my misery by upbraiding me for shewing them such bad example, and giving them so wicked counsel.

But I shall proceed to detail some particular scenes which I saw in my dream during my visit to this dismal prison.

Visit to Souls in Prison.

During the former part of my stay, every individual seemed only to attend to his own agony without appearing to notice his near-

eſt companions in wo ; but in a moment, as if by inviſible inſtinct, a general inſurrection of millions took place, all manifeſting their enmity to each other. This continued for a conſiderable ſpace, till their fury ſeemed gradually to ſubſide ; after this a gloomy ſtillneſs ſucceeded. Inquiring into the reaſon of this uproar, I underſtood it was a kind of periodical frenzy, excited by deſpair, which ſeized their minds, and rouſed, in the higheſt degree, their enmity againſt each other ; that they thus fought, not until their enmity ceaſed, but till their ſtrength to vent it abated.

When tranquillity was reſtored, I made up to a man loaded with chains. I inquired into his hiſtory, and he gave me the following detail :

Hiſtory of METHUSA.

I HAVE been here ever ſince the old world was deſtroyed by water. My parents were like the reſt of that world, deſperately wicked. They gave me no good counſel when young, and their example was as bad as bad could be. I imitated all their iniquitous conduct as ſoon as I could ſpeak. However, I cannot ſay I periſhed without being forewarned : for I lived within a mile of Noah's town, and had often an opportunity of hearing him preach ; but the inſtant he had finiſhed his ſermon, I joined

the reſt of my brethren in mocking and ſtoning him away from our fields. I ſhall never forget the firſt time he declared publicly and with vaſt concern, the approaching deſtruction of the world by water; the moment he broached it, there was a univerſal burſt of laughter. He certainly would have been put to death inſtantly, had we not been perſuaded he was out of his reaſon. In all our companies the firſt toaſt that was given was *Noah's flood;* and Noah himſelf was the ſong of the drunkard. When he began to build his ark, you can ſcarcely conceive the ſport it afforded in the whole country. Numbers out of curioſity went to ſee it; and after viewing the fabric, they generally held up their hands, exclaiming, What folly and madneſs! Often did Noah exhort the ſpectators to repent and turn unto the Lord, and beſought them with tears to conſider their ways, leſt deſtruction ſhould ſeize them in a day when they looked not for it; but they liſtened to him juſt as you would to a madman. He hired me to aſſiſt him in building his ark. The workmen, after receiving their weeks' wages, generally retired to an inn in the neighbourhood, and there we continued for hours together in one roar of laughter about our week's work, juſt as if we had been employed in making wheels to the ſun.

In this kind of way I ſpent my life, till one day that many of our townsfolk and I were at a wedding ſome miles off. After ſpending the day in great merriment, on our way home we were overtaken with the moſt tremendous ſtorm man ever witneſſed; the rain deſcended in torrents, and the wind blew a perfect hurricane. The road ſoon became almoſt impaſſable, and our hearts began to fail us. A young woman whom I led by the hand, whiſpered in my ear, Do you think this is Noah's flood? I anſwered, I cannot ſay, but it looks very like it. Before we got home we were almoſt walking to the knees in water; but as our town ſtood upon a riſing ground, our houſes were tolerably dry; and as we were extremely fatigued, we went to bed, and ſoon fell faſt aſleep; but early in the morning we were awakened by the waters having riſen ſo as to make the bed clothes ſwim. Without ſpeaking a word, all of us haſtened to the roof of the houſe; but how dreadful was our horror, when we ſaw that the whole country was one ſheet of water! Beds, ſtools, tents, and dead carcaſes were every minute ſailing paſt. An old man from a neighbouring houſe called over to us not to be afraid; that he had ſeen a ſcene ſomething like this about 500 years ago, and it ſubſided when it came within a

foot of the top of his door. This intelligence raised a gleam of hope in all our minds. I then went down into the house, and brought up some victuals which we parted to each other, and ate in silence, waiting the termination of the sad catastrophe. We spent several days and nights in most dreadful suspense; she beheld with horror the water rising higher and higher; all the provisions we could possibly collect were consumed, and destruction appeared inevitable. At length we perceived a huge body moving towards us; upon its nearer approach we saw that it was Noah's ark, which contained him and family. As it passed about a quarter of a mile from us, our cries for assistance could not be heard, nor was the smallest notice taken of us by any in the ark. Now we remembered the entreaties of Noah; when too late we condemned ourselves that we had been deaf to his counsel. Houses around us began to tumble, and all the inhabitants were carried along by the impetuous current. At last ours went to pieces, and down we plunged into the deep. In a few minutes I was suffocated, and my soul carried to this dismal world; and here I have been ever since!

This man repented not at the preaching of Noah, and his soul was lost forever! But a greater than Noah preaches to us.

If these men who refused to hear Noah, died without mercy, how much sorer punishment shall we deserve, if we despise the miracles and ministry of Jesus Christ! Reader, flee to the Redeemer, as the manslayer did to the city of refuge; call upon him while he is near; this is *your* day of grace; part of it is past since you began to read this mournful story.

Remember your Creator in the days of your youth. If you die not soon, the days are coming, when your strength shall be so exhausted, that the grasshopper alighting upon your shoulders shall feel as a burden; but if you become a tree of righteousness, yielding fruit unto God, you shall continue to flourish and bring forth fruit forever.

Retire to your closets at least evening and morning. There read and meditate on the scriptures. Pour out your hearts to God in prayer; think upon your needs; look to Jesus to supply them; love, honour, obey your parents. Cease to do evil, learn to do well. Flee youthful lusts which *war* against the soul, by beholding the Lamb of God, who took away, by his obedience unto death, the sins of the world. Do justly, delight in contemplating God's mercy to sinners, in shewing mercy to others, and walk humbly with our God.

After musing for some time upon my last interview, I was hailed by one at a distance to come and speak with him. Accordingly I went. As you have come, said he, to take a survey of our pit, I will take you to an old prisoner, who can relate his story very fluently.

After taking me to his cell, he desired me to walk in and make the most of him. My conductor desired him to relate his history, which he, without any hesitation, proceeded to give. The following is an abridged detail of it in his own words, as nearly as I can recollect.

History of HAMAN.

I LIVED in Judea during the whole period when the Son of God was on earth. I knew him from his earliest years, and heard him frequently preach. His reproaching us for our manner of life, so displeased and irritated me, that I combined with others to defame him wherever I went. I witnessed many of his miracles; but my enmity was so strong against him, that I attributed all his power to a connexion he had with the prince of darkness. I was one of the five thousand whom he fed with the five barley loaves, and two small fishes.

When I saw this miracle performed, I own I was very well pleased, and professed myself a friend and follower of Jesus.

But why? Why, thought I, if this man can feed us by a power which he possesses, I shall no more need to work. Accordingly I, with many others, followed him over the lake Gennesareth, merely for bodily sustenance; but he knew our motives, and gave us so severe a reprimand, that my indignation was increased ten-fold. I laboured to propagate all the stories I could invent against Jesus. I was one of his accusers before Pilate, and witnessed his crucifixion. After his resurrection I heard the apostles proclaiming pardon through his death to the chief of sinners. Though many of my companions were converted by their preaching, it had no effect upon me at all; they gave up my company, but I used continually to ridicule them for their folly wherever I met them. But a period was soon put to all my wickedness; while walking one day along the street in Jerusalem, a stone fell from a house, and struck me upon the head, which stupified me in a moment. I know not how long I may have breathed afterwards; but on a sudden I found myself imprisoned in this awful jail. I have none to comfort me, not even a cup of cold water to cool my tongue! When I begin to complain,

my associates in misery burst forth with imprecations, declaring that my words and example in the world were the chief causes of their destruction.

Upon this I left Haman and held a conversation with a young lady but lately committed to this prison. She was daughter to a gentleman of fashion still in the world. Her tale is indeed affecting, though far from being extraordinary. I shall state her own account of it, and nearly in her own words. After conversing for ten minutes upon different topics, she proceeded to say :

History of Sophia.

I was born to a considerable fortune in the world, and the whole attention of my parents was directed to fit me for shining in the gay circles of life. Thousands of times they chid me for not sitting erect, for not walking gracefully, for not talking correctly. Music, dancing, drawing, and other polite accomplishments, engrossed almost every waking hour till I was turned fifteen years of age. During all this bustling period, I received very little information about God, heaven, or hell. I have sometimes

ſeen whole companies at our houſe highly diverted at ſtories about ſome people called Religioniſts, Seceders, Methodiſts, &c. but they never condeſcended upon any particulars reſpecting their tenets, ſo I had no opportunity at that time of knowing them.

When about ſixteen years of age I began to know that I had a genteel perſon, with a fine countenance, and I aſſure you I valued myſelf not a little upon theſe poor periſhing qualifications. The moſt of my time was now taken up with dreſſing and undreſſing; two or three hours were daily conſumed peeping into the mirror, adjuſting my bonnet, gown, hair, &c. I had no more concern about my ſoul than the child unborn. However, my maid made me very ſerious one day. I ſaw frequently ſhe had a deſire to talk of ſomething which ſhe feared I would not much reliſh, but that day ſhe plucked up courage, and told me very gravely, Miſs Sophia, I fear your mind is wholly engroſſed with the follies of life, that you ſeldom attend to the eternal ſalvation of your immortal ſoul. It is your intereſt as well as your duty, to conſider what ſhall become of you when you die. Remember that God made us, that he daily preſerves us, and provides for us all the good things we enjoy; that he obſerves our conduct with a watchful and penetrating

eye, and will at laſt bring us unto judgment to anſwer for our ſins. Remember he has put his bleſſed word into our hands to make us wiſe and happy in time and in eternity. Here ſhe ſtopped, for ſhe was terrified I would take offence at her freedom. Theſe few faithful hints from my maid made me tremble. Away I ran to the drawing room, where my father was laughing over a novel he was reading to my mother. I had ſcarce got to the middle of the room, when I cried out, weeping, O father, I fear I am a great ſinner, and that it is dangerous to live as I am doing. Magdalen has given me ſome very ſerious advices about reading the ſcriptures; tell me what you think I ſhould do. Without anſwering me a word, he rang the bell with all his might, and ordered up Magdalen. The moment ſhe entered the room, he said, Dame, if you ever open your mouth to Sophia, or any of my children, about theſe enthuſiaſtic cants, that inſtant you muſt be gone from my houſe; now mind what I ſay. Magdalen gave a courteſy, and walked out with her eyes fixed on the ground. He then took me aſide, and told me not to believe ſuch idle nonſenſe, that they were only the ravings of a ſet of madmen, who try to turn the world upſide down with their ſtupid jargon. He then held up to ridicule

ſome pious men, and in a ſhort time laughed me out of all my fears.

Notwithſtanding the fright which my father gave Magdalen, ſhe was always, as if accidentally, leaving little religious tracts in my bed room. Sometimes I burned them, and ſometimes took no notice of them; at other times, out of mere curioſity, I would take a ſtolen peep. Two lines of one of them one day went to my heart, like a dagger; it was to this effect: Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye ſhall ſee him! I could not forget theſe words; in ſhort they ſeemed as if nailed to my mind. My parents, perceiving me penſive and melancholy, often urged me to aſſign the reaſon; but I would not. However, they hurried me from play to play, from ball to ball, and from company to company, till they accompliſhed their horrid purpoſe; I mean, till they removed effectually every ſerious impreſſion from my mind; for this concern never returned. My parents, ſir, have been the murderers of my poor ſoul; and if ever I meet them in theſe abodes of the miſerable, I ſhall reproach them through eternity, for their cruelty to me. Had they let me alone, I might probably have found the way of life; but now theſe happy gates are forever ſhut against me! I am forced

to bear the indignation of the Lord for ſinning againſt him, and not following out his calls to me in the world !

But to return to my narrative. When I reached my twenty ſecond year, a young gentleman of fortune paid his addreſſes to me. He and his friends flattered me beyond meaſure. Every word I ſpoke commanded ſilence, was attended to, and admired. If I happened to utter one witty expreſſion, though borrowed from a novel I had read the preceding evening, it was extolled to the very ſkies, and repeated with eclat in companies for a month after. By this abominable flattery I was completely ruined. I thought the wiſdom of Solon, or the eloquence of Cicero, contemptible when compared to mine, ſo completely did I fall before flattery.

Before the nuptials were to be celebrated, my father carried me up to London to kill the intervening time ; every hour of which appeared an age. He led me through the throngs of nobility and gentry which crowd the metropolis, and my approaching marriage was the tea and card table talk over the whole city.

After many a fatiguing route, we took our journey home ; on the third day I caught a ſevere cold, and had only arrived a few days at my native city when I fever-

ed. I saw that my relations were alarmed, but they endeavoured to appear cheerful, and tried every expedient to keep up my spirits. They prohibited all my visitors from giving the most distant hint of my approaching dissolution. I thought much upon the conversations I had had with our old servant Magdalen, and was extremely anxious my father would send for her, as she then lived very near us; but he was enraged at the mention of her name. However, he sent for a preacher much admired among the fashionable people. When he came, I told him I was dying, and was very apprehensive the consequences would be dreadful, for I had lived a most thoughtless life. I said if the Bible be a true book I am ruined forever. He replied, that he was persuaded I had lived a very harmless, inoffensive life, and God being a merciful God would certainly take me to heaven. But, Sir, said I, God has given us many commandments, most of which I have neglected, how can I then be inoffensive? O, said he, don't allow those kind of notions to enter your mind; you have done ill to nobody; I wish I was as fit for dying as you are. Upon this my father entered the room, and began to tell him what a fine, obedient daughter I had been, and how little I had to answer for in comparison to many. The

preacher ſhook hands with me, deſired me to keep up my ſpirits, and aſſured me there was no occaſion of alarm reſpecting eternity. This ſerved, in a great meaſure, to remove my fears. Every waking moment afterwards, when I could bear it, my friends had ſome gay acquaintance at my bedſide to amuſe me with converſation. Thus time moved on till my ſtrength was wholly exhauſted; and one evening, while they were adminiſtering ſome medicine, I became extremely ill, and in a few minutes expired, amidſt the ſcreams of my ſurrounding friends. The next moment I found myſelf ſhut up in this priſon of wo; and you ſee me ſurrounded with thieves, murderers and blaſphemers, with whom I muſt be an aſſociate in miſery through eternity. O, who can dwell with everlaſting burnings!

Reader! are you ſorry for Sophia? Remember, that if you live thoughtleſs and careleſs, you ſhall ſoon be plunged into the ſame miſery. If you are living without prayer, it is in vain to hope for mercy from God. If you do not love and ſerve Jeſus Chriſt, you are under the ſame condemnation with Sophia, only the ſentence is not executed againſt you. This is your day of grace. God beſeeches you to be reconciled to him, to behold his Son who was crucified

for ſin, to depend upon his death as the only foundation of hope. To day, if you hear God's voice, if you attend to his calls and invitations, you will inſtantly ceaſe to do evil, and learn to do well. No doubt your companions will think it ſtrange for a while that you do not keep pace with them in their follies and faſhions; but what ſignifies their mockery, if you are ſaved from the wrath to come? God does not deſire you to live as your neighbours would have you, but to live godly and to walk humbly with him, and he will make you happier than ever you have been.

You will ſoon find out better companions and more rational amuſements. Aſſociate with them who fear God. Read the ſcriptures every day. Remember to ſanctify the Sabbath. Attend the miniſtry of none but thoſe who preach the goſpel, who ſpeak much about a crucified Jeſus. Read Omicron's Letters, by Mr. Newton, of London, and alſo his Cardiphonia. The Reign of Grace, by Mr. Booth, is alſo an admirable book. Witherſpoon upon Regeneration, and Doddridge's Sermons to young People, are alſo good books. But read the ſcriptures more than any other books.

History of David Pride, *related by himself.*

I was born in the city of Edinburgh, during the days of John Knox. My father poſſeſſed conſiderable property, from whom I had the moſt liberal education which the city could afford. When at the grammar ſchool, I daily heard the high encomiums paſſed upon the heathen gods, and on the virtue and magnanimity of heathen warriors. Theſe heatheniſh harangues deprived me of the tincture of religion I had imbibed from my catechiſm and Bible at the reading ſchool. I was alſo taught to believe that all my ſucceſs and happineſs in afterlife hinged on being a good or bad linguiſt. Receiving theſe ſentiments, I conſidered the obtaining a knowledge of the dead languages, as *the one thing needful.* In ſhort, I was ſo abſorbed in this perſuaſion, that I minded nothing elſe. From morning to night I was so taken up preparing for ſhining in the then preſent world, that the infinitely more important concerns of my ſoul were completely overlooked. Indeed it never once occurred to me that there was a world to come, or that men were made for any nobler purpoſe than what could take place in the boundaries of

time. How dreadful was it that nobody cared for my poor ſoul, that nobody recommended to me the writings of Jehovah! I perhaps would not have taken it kind at the time, but they ought, notwithſtanding, to have perſiſted in urging me on to conſider thoſe things which pertained to my eternal peace. Many good men viſited my father's houſe; but knowing that he was a wicked man, they thought it bad breeding to commend the Saviour in his company; this was abominable cowardice, a ſhameful compliance with the world, a want of zeal for God.

After finiſhing my courſe at the high ſchool, I went to college, in purſuit of what was called mental accompliſhments. By dint of application I ſoon became a proficient in the various branches of polite literature. I became ſo acute a reaſoner, ſo ingeniouſly ſophiſtical, that I generally turned the ſcale in every debate in which I engaged. My companions admired my abilities, and courted my company. I ridiculed the righteous, and condemned them as fanatics upon every occaſion. I pleaded for the dignity of human nature, and many an eulogium I paſſed upon the noble powers of man. I called ſin human frailty. I called holineſs human folly, the deſpicable imagination of a diſtempered

brain. Thus I went on, as ignorant as a Hottentot about divine things. I expected to make a figure in the world, to arrive at the pinnacle of human glory, and do something to hand down my name to succeeding ages. But behold, in the prime of life, I was seized with a consumption; I was soon given over by my physicians, and death stared me in the face in all his ghastly horrors. I called for cards, novels, music, &c. if possible to banish thought. I tried to be cheerful, that my friends might talk of my fortitude; but I assure you, I had a quivering heart. My greatest enemies were those who called themselves my dearest friends; they attempted to divert my attention from my approaching doom by every satanic stratagem. They removed from my chamber a Bible which had remained for years unmolested on my shelf; all divinity books suffered the same banishment. But their greatest cruelty appeared only two days previous to my departure, when a poor woman in the country, who had nursed me, hearing of my great distress, called to inquire for me; and being admitted to my bedside, she began, in the mildest manner, to talk of the lost and perishing condition of man; but, when just beginning to mutter something about the Saviour, my sister pushed her out of my

chamber, ordering her, upon her peril, never to enter the door again. I complained of this usage, and petitioned for her readmission, but this was denied. I was too feeble to dispute, and was obliged to submit.

I was quite ignorant of what awaited me, but I feared dissolution. I would have given ten thousand worlds for a few years' addition to my days; however, my heart strings broke, and my soul flew to the abodes of misery. I have now more than 200 years suffered inconceivable misery; but after the general judgment, I know that my punishment will be greatly augmented. I am beyond all hope of recovery, an unmeasurable eternity of wo is before me. I see now, when too late, that there is a reality in religion; that the truly pious are the only wise men in the world; I feel, to my sad experience, the truth of those threatenings contained in the scriptures, at which I once used to smile; but I find God now laughs at the calamity which hath come upon me, and mocks me when my fear has come as a desolation. I have no hand to turn to. I know my nurse has reached the realms of eternal felicity. The good advices she sometimes gave me are as fresh upon my memory as the moment she gave them, and every recollection of them is as the thrusting a dagger to my heart.

History of Francis Lostboy.

Francis was born in the village of Vanity, in the parish of Hirelingpriest. His father was a collier, addicted to drinking to excess almost from a child, and he, poor man, thought it fine sport to give his son liquor till he was scarce able to stand, when he was only six years of age. This rivetted in him a habit which stuck to him till his death.

The mother of Francis was daughter to a coal driver who lived in a little wicked town, which some time ago got the name of Profanity; and well it deserved that name. There was hardly a person in it who did not either drink immoderately or swear roundly; even the children in the street used to swear, steal and tell lies. On the Lord's day there was scarce half a dozen of people who went to any place of worship. Some said they had not a cap; others pretended that their gown was not good enough; others, that they toiled so hard through the week, they must have a day of rest; and some had the effrontery to say, they *must* stay at home and cook the dinner. In this way almost the whole town absented themselves from hearing the

glad tidings of ſalvation, by Jeſus Chriſt: indeed Sabbath was the wickedeſt day in the week in that place. Had you taken a walk about the town in time of ſermon, you would have ſeen ſome drinking in the ale houſe, others loitering in their beds, ſome lolling behind hedges and trees in the fields, idly ſquandering away their precious moments, forgetting that now is the accepted time, that now is the day of ſalvation.

From this town came the mother of poor Francis, and ſhe was not a whit better than her neighbours. Of courſe Francis got no education from his parents, nor did any other care for his ſoul. Every thing he could carry away from his neighbours unobſerved, he ſeized and brought home. He ſaw this conduct pleaſed his parents, though they had cunning enough to ſay nothing. By this he was much encouraged in his wickedneſs. Sometimes he was caught in the very act of ſtealing, and received many a ſevere drubbing. But this did not prevent him from perſiſting in his crimes.

One day a boy aſked him if he would go along with him to a Sabbath evening ſchool in the village of Sobriety, which was only half a mile from Vanity, where he would hear fine things about the love of God to ſinners, about heaven, about the evil of ſwearing, ſtealing, &c. Francis,

inſtead of thanking the boy for his good advice, firſt laughed heartily at him, and then tumbled him into the ditch. This good boy's name was Timothy Truth. At this very inſtant the proprietor of the village came up, (who was a good man) and inquired into the reaſon of the ſcuffle. The moment he underſtood what had happened, he put his hand into his pocket, and gave young Timothy five ſhillings to purchaſe a Bible and other good books; but turning about to Francis, he ſaid, As for you, ſirrah, you deſerve to be baniſhed the country; go home and learn to read and work, leſt you bring yourſelf by your wickedneſs to an untimely end; good would it be for you to follow the example of Timothy, but your parents, ſirrah, are more to blame than yourſelf.

When ſixteen or ſeventeen years of age, Francis became a poſtillion, for he could not ſettle to any ſtationary trade, having a ſtrong propenſity to roam about from place to place. All the money he earned was inſtantly ſquandered away in bad company. However, theſe days of ſin and folly were ſoon finiſhed; for, when driving his chaiſe furiouſly down a ſteep hill, his horſes took fright, and run over a precipice on the ſide of the high way, and poor Francis was killed on the ſpot.

Thus was he hurried away to the judgment ſeat of Jeſus, without a moment's warning, or the ſmalleſt preparation for that awful event.

I now awoke from my ſleep, and behold it was a dream!

FINIS.

The Stoning of STEPHEN.

"Such was Stephen's meekness, that, like his great Master, he died praying for his murderers." *See page* 39.

THE SLUGGARD.

Be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit. . . . . *Bible.*

LINCOLN & EDMANDS,

Publish and have for sale at their

Theological and Miscellaneous

BOOKSTORE 53 CORNHILL,

A great variety of interesting

Books for Juvenile Minds.

Among others are the following:

FENELON'S REFLECTIONS

For every day of the month. With Frontispiece. 12 cts. 1.12 a dozen.

A MONUMENT

Of Parental Affection to a dear and only Son. By [illegible] J. Gilpin. To which is added, Me[illegible] Miss E. [illegible]. A book which [illegible] the finer feelings of the heart. 12 cts.

THE FRIENDLY INSTRUCTOR,

Or, a Companion for young Masters & Misses in which their duty to God, and their parents, their Carriage to superiors and inferiors, and several other very useful and [illegible] lessons are recommended, in plain [illegible] familiar Dialogues. By a Lady. 12 cts.

THOUGHTLESSNESS CORRECTED.

Or the [illegible] Wills. 6 cts.

SCHOOL BOOKS & STATIONERY

Of the various kinds, supplied on the best terms; and *Printing* well executed by Lincoln & Edmands, [illegible]